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No. 1.—Memorandum made 4th August, 1865, of conversation, held on the preceding day between Messrs. Macdonald and Brown.

Mr. Macdonald, yesterday, sought an interview with Mr. Brown and informed him that His Excellency the Governor General had sent for him, that morning, and had stated his desire that the Administration, as it was formed in 1864, should continue in office, with as few changes as possible, in order to carry out the policy announced by the Government on its formation—that, with that view His Excellency had expressed the opinion that the most obvious mode of supplying the place, vacated by the death of Sir Etienne Taché, would be for Mr. Macdonald to assume the position of First Minister—as being the Senior Member of the Ministry—and that Mr. Cartier would, on the same principle, become the Leader of the Lower Canadian Section of the Government—and that, for the purpose of carrying those views into effect, he had commissioned Mr. Macdonald to take the post of First Minister—at the same time requesting all the other Ministers to retain their offices. Mr. Macdonald further informed Mr. Brown that he had assented to this proposition of His Excellency, and had seen Mr. Cartier, who, at once, agreed to it. He then invited Mr. Brown to accede to the proposal of His Excellency.

Mr. Brown replied that he was quite prepared to enter into arrangements for the continuance of the Government in the same position it occupied previous to the death of Sir Etienne Taché; but that the proposal now made, involved a grave departure from that position. The Government, heretofore, had been a coalition of three political parties, each represented by an active party leader, but all acting under one chief—who had ceased to be actuated by strong party feelings or personal ambitions, and who was well fitted to give confidence to all the three sections of the coalition that the conditions which united them would be carried out in good faith to the very letter. Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Cartier, and himself (Mr. Brown) were, on the contrary, regarded as party leaders, with party feelings and aspirations; and to place any one of them in an attitude of superiority over the others, with the vast advantage of the Premiership, would, in the public mind, lessen the security for good faith, and seriously endanger the existence of the Coalition. It would be an entire change of the situation. Whichever of the three was so preferred, the act would amount to an abandonment of the coalition basis and a re-construction of the Government on ordinary party principles, under a party leader unacceptable to a large portion of those on whose support the existence of the Ministry depended. Mr. Brown reminded Mr. Macdonald that when the coalition was formed, the Liberal party in opposition, constituted a majority of the House of Assembly:—that, solely for the accomplishment of a great measure of Reform essential to the peace and progress of the country, they had laid aside, for the time, party considerations, and consented to form a coalition with their opponents, on conditions which nothing but the strongest sense of public duty could have induced them to accept. He reminded Mr. Macdonald of the disadvantageous and embarrassing position he (Mr. Brown) and his colleagues, Mr. McDougall and Mr. Howland, had occupied during the past year,—united as they were with nine political opponents, who held all the important Departments of State;—and he asked him to reflect in what light the liberal party must regard this new proposition to abandon their distinctive position, and place one of their chief opponents in the premiership, though his conservative supporters in Parliament were much inferior, numerically, to the Reform supporters of the coalition.

Mr. Brown stated his conviction that the right mode of settling the question, would be to invite some gentleman, of good position in the Legislative Council, under whom all the three great parties to the coalition could act with confidence, to become the successor of Colonel Taché. In no other way, he thought, could the position, heretofore existing, be continued. Mr. Brown concluded by saying that the proposal of Mr. Macdonald was, palpably, one for the construction of a new Government, and that if the aid of the Reform Party of Upper Canada in the Assembly were desired in its formation, a distinct statement of the policy of the new Government must be made, and a definite proposition submitted. Speaking, however, for himself alone, he (Mr. Brown) occupied now precisely the ground that he had held in the negociations of 1864; he stood prepared to give an outside but frank and earnest, support to any Administration that might be formed, pledged like the Coalition Government, to carry through Parliament, in the spring Session of next year, either a measure for the final completion of the Confederation scheme of the Quebec Conference, or one for removing existing difficulties in Canada, by the introduction of the Federal principle into the system of Government, coupled with such provisions as will permit the Maritime Provinces and the North-west Territory to be incorporated into the system.

Mr. Macdonald stated in answer that at the time the Coalition was effected in 1864, Sir Etienne Taché held the position of Premier with him, (Mr. Macdonald,) as leader of the Lower House, and of the Upper Canadian section of the Government. That on reference to the memorandum containing the basis of Coalition, it will be seen that Mr. Brown at first preferred to support the Government in its policy as then settled without entering the Government, but that it was afterwards agreed in deference to the wishes of his supporters and at the pressing instance of Mr. Macdonald that he and two of his political friends should enter the Government. These terms were acceded to, the offices that happened to be then vacant placed at Mr. Brown's disposal, and the Coalition was completed. Mr. Macdonald further stated that Sir Etienne Taché was not selected at the time of the Coalition or as a part of the agreement for the Coalition, as First Minister, but he had been previously and was then the Head of the Conservative Government, and was accepted with all his Lower Canadian Colleagues without change. That on the lamented decease of Sir Etienne, His Excellency had, without any previous communication of his opinion to him or (as he understood) to any one else, come to the conclusion that the best mode of carrying on the Government was (as already stated) for Mr. Macdonald to take one step upward; that Mr. Cartier, as next in seniority should do so also, and that the other arrangements should remain as before. That he (Mr. Macdonald) thought with His Excellency that this was the best solution of the matter, and could not but accede to it; that, however, he had no personal feeling in the matter, and that if he had, he thought it his duty to set aside such feeling for the sake of carrying out the great scheme so happily commenced, to a successful issue. He therefore would readily stand aside and waive his pretensions, so that some other party than himself might be appointed to the Premiership; that he thought Mr. Cartier should be that party; that after the death of Colonel Taché, Mr. Cartier, beyond a doubt, was the most influential man in his section of the Country, and would be selected by the Lower Canadian supporters of the Government as their leader; that neither Mr. Brown nor Mr. Macdonald could dictate to Lower Canada as to their selection of leader: that the Premier must be, according to usage, the leader or senior member either from Upper or Lower Canada: and that as he (Mr. Macdonald), had, in consequence of the position taken by Mr. Brown, waived his own pretentions, it followed that Mr. Cartier should be appointed as Prime Minister. Mr. Macdonald stated in conclusion that although he had no reason to suppose that His Excellency would object to the selection of Mr. Cartier, yet he must of course submit the proposition to him, and obtain His Excellency's assent to it.

Mr. Brown replied that in some of the views suggested by Mr. Macdonald, there was a difference between this proposition and the original one: but still that this, like the other, would be a proposal for the construction of a new Government, in a manner seriously affecting the security held by the Liberal party. Before saying anything upon such a proposition, however, were it formally made, he would desire to consult his friends, Mr. McDougall and Mr. Howland.

The interview then terminated, and the following correspondence took place.

No. 2.—Hon. John A. Macdonald to Hon. George Brown.

My Dear Sir, *Quebec, August* 4, 1865.

Immediately after our conversation, the heads of which we have reduced to writing, I obtained His Excellency's permission to propose to you that Mr. Cartier, as being the Leader of the Ministerial majority of Lower Canada in Parliament, should assume the position of Prime Minister, vacated by the death of Sir Etienne Taché, the other members of the administration continuing to hold their position and offices as before. All the Lower Canadian Members of the Council assent to this proposition, so do Mr. Campbell and myself; and I am sure I can also speak for Mr. Solicitor General Cockburn who is now absent.

May I request the favour of an early reply.

Believe me,
My dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

JOHN A. MACDONALD.

The Hon. Geo. Brown,
&c. &c. &c.

No. 3.—Hon. George Brown to Hon. John A. Macdonald.

My dear Sir, *Quebec, August* 4, 1865.

I have received your letter of this afternoon, inviting me to retain my present position in a Government to be formed under the Premiership of Mr. Cartier. In reply, I have now to state, after consultation with Messrs. Howland and MacDougall, that we can only regard this proposition as one for the construction of a new Government, in a manner seriously affecting the security heretofore held by the Liberal Party. Anxiously desirous, as we are, however, that nothing should occur at this moment to jeopardise the plans of the Coalition Government on the constitutional question, we cannot assume the responsibility of either accepting or rejecting it, without consultation with our political friends. This I am prepared to do without any delay, and to that end it will be necessary that I have clearly stated in writing the basis on which Mr. Cartier proposes to construct the new Government.

I am, my dear sir,
Yours, truly,

GEO. BROWN.

The Hon. John A. Macdonald,
&c., &c. &c.

No. 4.—Hon. John A. Macdonald to Hon. George Brown.

Quebec, *Saturday, 5th August*, 1865.

My Dear Sir,

I regret to learn from your note of yesterday that you cannot assume the responsibility, without first consulting your political friends, of either accepting or rejecting the proposition that Mr. Cartier should be placed at the head of the Government in the stead of the late Sir Etienne Taché, with the understanding that the rest of the Council should retain their present offices and positions under him. I have conferred with Mr. Cartier on the subject, and we agree that, at this late hour, it would be highly inexpedient to wait for the result of this consultation.

Parliament is to assemble on Tuesday next, and in our opinion, it would greatly prejudice the position of the Government as well as the future prospects of the great scheme in which we are all engaged, if we met Parliament with the administration in an incomplete state and therefore with no fixed policy.

I have His Excellency's permission to state his concurrence in this view, and his opinion that the public interests require the immediate reconstruction of the Ministry.

Under these circumstances and to prevent the possibility of the scheme for the Confederation of British North America receiving any injury from the appearance of disunion among those who coalesced for the purpose of carrying it into effect, Mr. Cartier and I, without admitting that there are any sufficient grounds for setting either of us aside, have agreed to propose that Sir Narcisse Belleau shall assume the position of First Minister and Receiver General vice Sir Etienne Taché, that the position and offices of the other members of the Executive Council shall remain as before and that the policy of the Government shall be the same as was laid before Parliament in July, 1864, as the basis of the Coalition which was then formed. His Excellency authorizes me to make this proposition and expresses his desire for an early answer.

Believe me,
My Dear Sir,
Yours Faithfully,

JOHN A. MACDONALD.

The Hon. GEORGE BROWN.
&c., &c, &c.

No. 5.—HON. GEORGE BROWN TO HON. JOHN A. MACDONALD.

Quebec, 5th August, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR— Saturday, 5, P. M.

Your note of this afternoon was handed to me by Col. Bernard, and having communicated its contents to my colleagues, I now beg to state the conclusions at which we have arrived.

Without intending the slightest discourtesy to Sir Narcisse Belleau, we deem it right to remind you that we would not have selected that gentleman as successor to Sir Etienne Taché; but as he is the selection of Mr. Cartier and yourself, and as we are equally with you desirous of preventing the scheme for the Confederation of British America receiving injury from the appearance of disunion among us, we shall offer no objection to his appointment.

I think, however, it will be necessary that Sir Narcisse Belleau shall have stated to him and shall accept, in more distinct terms than you have indicated, the policy on which our Coalition now rests. It is quite right that the basis of June, 1864, should be stated as the basis still, but he should also clearly understand the modification of that agreement, rendered necessary by succeeding events, and which was ratified by Sir Etienne Taché in March, 1865. The agreement of June 1864, was as follows:—

"The Government are prepared to pledge themselves to bring in a "measure next session, for the purpose of removing existing difficulties "by introducing the Federal principle into Canada, coupled with such "provisions as will permit the Maritime Provinces and the North-west "Territory to be incorporated into the same system of Government. "And the Government will seek by sending representatives to the "Lower Provinces and to England, to secure the assent of those interests "which are beyond the control of our own legislation to such a measure "as may enable all British North America to be united under a general "legislature based upon the Federal principle."

Sir Narcisse Belleau should understand that occurrences in the maritime Provinces unfortunately prevented this agreement from being carried out, so far as regards time; that it became necessary to consider what course ought to be pursued in consequence of these occurrences: and that we came to an agreement that we should earnestly strive for the adoption of the scheme of the Quebec conference,—but should we be unable to remove the objections of the maritime Provinces in time to present a measure

at the opening of the session of 1866 for the completion of the Confederation scheme, we would then present to Parliament and press with all the influence of Government, a measure for the reform of the constitutional system of Canada, as set forth in the above agreement of June, 1864.

I remain,
My dear Sir,
Yours truly,

GEO. BROWN.

The Hon. John A. Macdonald.

No. 6.—Hon. John A. Macdonald to Hon. George Brown.

Quebec, August 7, 1865.

My Dear Sir,

Sir Narcisse Belleau returned from the Country yesterday, and I am happy to inform you that he has, though with great reluctance, acceded to the request of Mr. Cartier and myself, and accepted the position of First Minister, with the office of Receiver General.

He accepts the policy of the late Government as stated in your note of Saturday to me, and adopts it as that which will govern his administration.

This policy will of course be announced in both Houses of Parliament, as soon as possible.

Believe me,
Faithfully Yours,

JOHN A. MACDONALD.

The Honorable,
Geo. Brown,
&c., &c., &c.